

are called formal and informal proceedings. The formal proceedings are very elaborate. There are more hearings. All of the hearings have to be noticed, publication in the paper and then we have another set of proceedings that are called informal proceedings which is a shorter, cheaper way of probating estates. And the dispute arose as to whether a fee was applicable on an inheritance tax determination because some courts felt that an inheritance tax determination, in and of itself, made the proceeding a formal proceeding and that the inheritance tax fee which is about \$15.00 had to be paid and also a fee that is applicable to formal probate proceedings also had to be paid. What the law does, what this change does, it says that just because there is an inheritance tax proceeding doesn't mean it is a formal probate. So if you have a formal probate then you don't pay an inheritance tax fee and if it is informal you pay just the inheritance tax fee, so in other words, you never pay two separate fees. You pay just one fee. The net result is to reduce the cost to the consumer. The second technical change has to do with the provision that basically says that the powers of the personal representative are going to change three years after the date of death so that he doesn't have the same powers that he had prior to that three year period. I have never understood why they have that three year cutoff. It has caused problems though because there are just an awful lot of people, believe it or not, that don't get around to processing estates that should be processed until many years down the line. Then they are caught in a situation where the P.R. doesn't have adequate powers to transfer property and maybe one or two hearings are going to be necessary in order to clear that up. So what we have done is simply changed the law to delete the dilution of powers on the part of the personal representative so that the personal representative after the three year period has the same powers to come into court, establish the estate, transfer property or simply transfer property if it is not otherwise necessary to come into the state without any further court proceedings and without these court proceedings then, of course, it reduces costs and again, it is to the benefit of the consumer. So that is basically what this little technical bill is all about. Thank you.